

Community Resources for Learning

Support Standard 7

Sample High School effectively engages parents and families as partners in each student's education and encourages their participation in school programs and parent support groups. The school works to engage parents in the scholastic lives of their sons and daughters through outreach efforts by invitation to an open house, the annual parent conferences, parent support groups, and frequent parent forums and seminars. Parents are regularly contacted and involved in conferences regarding the learning needs of their children. For example, the freshman Core program invites parents and students to a family conference prior to the commencement of each academic year.

Additionally, parental involvement takes the form of participation in committees, tutoring, lecturing, and the budget process. They are frequently invited to programs that showcase student work, such as the Holocaust symposium, the Student Round Table, Shadow Days, and Graduation Challenge presentations.

School publications keep parents aware of events. The freshmen Core teachers and numerous other teachers maintain web pages which inform parents and students of daily assignments and resources. The parent newsletter, a monthly publication posted on the website, informs parents and community members of events that have taken place or that will be taking place at the high school in the future. The student handbook, published and mailed to each home prior to the start of each year, provides parents and students with information about the school schedule, school calendar, rules, activity participation, and on-campus parking. Daily announcements are posted in the main office, on the school's web page, and on numerous television monitors throughout the building. Additionally, an electronic events sign at the school's entrance alerts students and parents of upcoming events. There is also a parent group called Friends of Sample High School, a booster organization which supports activities such as dessert with the administrators and freshmen parent night.

The school consistently fosters productive business, community, and higher education partnerships, which create opportunities and enhance student learning. The Graduation Challenge program, the sophomore Trial Search project, DUO (Do Unto Others), Access to Sample High School education program, and multiple programs planned and delivered by the guidance department create integrated opportunities for students to connect to the community outside the school.

Working with community members is common for our students. Through Graduation Challenge- the school's senior capstone project—every senior finds a community consultant, works at least 30 hours in the field under the guidance of the consultant, writes a paper, and presents to a panel of teachers and community members. This program has broad-based support among all partners, as students are led through the process with the help of their teacher-advisor. There is also a course offered, Academic Internship, which gives students a chance to do up to 240 hours at an internship and earn English and community service credit. The Trial Search project is a sophomore project where students explore constitutional issues, and in the process, interview and interact with community members.

DUO is a community service credit based program with opportunities within the school and the surrounding community. DUO sponsors the Buddy program, which matches high school students with elementary students throughout the supervisory union. Training is given to all students taking on this responsibility.

Programs run by guidance counselors include Raising Aspirations (connecting first generation students or students at risk to college opportunity), College Fair, Sophomore Summit, Career Fair, and Community Service Fair. All these programs connect students to the community at large.

The Access to Sample High School community education program runs classes for all learners after school, and many students take classes or help teach classes through this program. This

past year over 3,000 participants registered for over 300 classes learning everything from computer skills, dance, painting, and cooking, to biotechnology skills and beekeeping. Local businesses sponsor and support these programs regularly.

In addition, the school's campus is a sought after site for student teachers from area colleges, and there are always a number of teachers in training on campus.

The school site and plant supports and enhances all aspects of the educational program and the support services for student learning. September 2005 marked the completion of a major renovation/addition to the school facility and grounds that has provided the students, community, faculty, and staff a larger, better organized and cleaner space for a positive learning environment. With the new brightly lit cafeteria and library, school morale has increased, with more space for students to gather and study. According to the building maintenance supervisor, there has been less damage and vandalism by the students. The new library incorporates two computer labs and a dozen research stations. The school's new Learning Center offers students yet another computer lab, as well as space for tutoring purposes and special education instruction.

The building project added 16 new classrooms, added or replaced movable walls, renovated offices, and added rooms for special education. The moveable walls have enhanced the freshmen Core and 10th grade Humanities programs, providing more opportunities for team teaching and interdisciplinary connections. The audio-visual room also was expanded and relocated, offering students a larger space to work on video projects.

Outside, the new athletic facilities offer students three additional team fields. Along with the fields, the school's track was refinished with a state of the art rubberized surface. The new gymnasium offers bleacher capacity of 1336, but could offer chair seating capacity to accommodate the entire student body and faculty. In addition, the new gym provides more teaching and practice space. The

locker rooms have expanded and been improved to include handicap accessibility, two new team rooms, and facilities for coaches and physical education instructors. The new construction and renovations have also provided students a state of the art fitness center filled with new equipment and afternoon supervised time for students and faculty members to improve upon their well-being.

Along with these improvements, the recent renovations added more parking spaces for faculty, staff and students. Separate parking lots allow for more efficient regulation of parking. There are now approximately 460 spaces for faculty, staff and senior drivers. Some parking is also available for junior drivers, with overflow parking capabilities nearby the school.

The school is currently in the initial planning phase for major renovations of the auditorium. The current auditorium is furnished with 420 new seats, *and there is a need for the school to expand the seating capacity.* The new auditorium project will focus on lighting and safety concerns as well as an increase of space both for performance and seating.

The physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with fire, health, and safety regulations. State approved inspectors inspect all building systems as required and issue a report to the facilities director. The facilities director and principal inspect the building daily, and any concerns are expeditiously addressed. When in-house inspections take place, work orders are issued to maintenance staff accordingly. When code violations are evident or detected, immediate steps are taken to correct them, and the facilities director, chief of operations, and principal are notified of code violations and plans for corrections. The school maintains a sufficient inventory of supplies to address routine maintenance issues. When necessary, outside contractors are scheduled to address special problems.

Equipment is adequate, properly maintained, inconsistently catalogued, and generally replaced when appropriate. All equipment is maintained and replaced according to need and/or

schedule. The equipment that makes the facility run (wood chip fired boiler, air-handling equipment, elevators, etc.) is maintained regularly and in some cases are even state inspected. The members of individual departments often are responsible for informing leadership and the maintenance director of classroom and work space needs. The departments also are responsible for cataloging their own equipment and making sure that it is properly maintained. The Information Technology (IT) team inventories and has a three year cyclical schedule for the replacement of its equipment. The Audio Visual department is currently in the process of uploading its inventory onto a new computer program used by our library, and the replacement of AV equipment is on an as-needed basis. Furniture replacement has been an annual project initiated by the maintenance director. *The cataloging system, in general, is inconsistent in the building. There exists no centrally located catalog nor, in a lot of cases, a consistent plan for replacing equipment.*

A planned (but inadequately funded) program of building and site management attempts to provide the appropriate maintenance, repair, and cleanliness of the school plant. This program is coordinated and supervised by the maintenance director and chief of operations in conjunction with the principal. The maintenance director creates the schedules for the custodial and maintenance staff that repair and maintain the site. The maintenance director is responsible for training and managing the staff, purchasing supplies and equipment, and creating the budget. There are two custodial shifts during the school year: 6:30am to 3:00 p.m. and the second from 3:00 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. The first shift includes two day custodians, one maintenance technician, one grounds keeper, and one grounds helper. The second shift includes one night supervisor and seven custodians. Their primary objective is to clean the facility. The custodial staff is instructed to check their areas for items that need maintenance or repair. They may fix these themselves or report the needs to the night supervisor and maintenance director so

sent to the maintenance director either by email or a work order form. The work requests are prioritized according to the seriousness of the concern. *The maintenance budget provides for necessary salaries, insurances, taxes, supplies, and equipment needed to maintain the facility. Due to the increase in square footage with the new facility, the budget will need to be increased in order to adequately maintain the building. At this point, the building is 225,000 square feet. The night custodial crew of eight members cleans 28,125 square feet each per shift. The ideal configuration of personnel versus square footage is 10 staff with 22,500 square feet.*

There is ongoing planning to address future programs, enrollment changes, staffing, facility, and technology needs as well as capital improvements. The data manager analyzes statistics collected from several sources such as MMS, a student management software and enrollment trends. This allows the school to address future programs that fit the school population. The data manager compiles reports which are used to study course enrollment trends, dictate staffing levels, and allocate course sections. The MMS student management software allows the school to keep track of student demographics, grades, transcripts, and schedules, as well as helping to develop the master schedule by providing a breakdown of student course requests. MMS also generates enrollment reports for the entire school, average daily attendance, enrollment in classes, transcripts, and other reports. It has the capability to sort information by student, by course, by department, or by teacher.

NESDC, New England School Development Corporation, provides the enrollment projections. These projections are based on the live birth rates, elementary school trends and residential building developments. The NESDC projections aid in the overall planning for future program changes. Additionally, the school's frameworks guided the decision about which kind of education the school wanted to provide, which assisted in the physical design of the school. The house directors and principal work with the chief of operations, the Information Technology (IT) team, and maintenance

director to ensure that the building and its technology are adequately funded and appropriate for the programs offered at the school. In 1998, members of the school's leadership team and facilities personnel initiated the plans for addressing the needs of the facility. From their work a larger committee was formed who proposed the renovations project which was completed in September 2005.

The community and the district's governing body ensures an adequate and dependable source of revenue to provide and maintain appropriate school programs, personnel, services, facilities, equipment, technological support, materials, and supplies for student learning. The budget process begins in October when teachers in departments are asked to draw up budget proposals for courses the following year. Once the departments have had a chance to discuss budgetary needs, requests are then returned to the administrator in charge of the respective department. School personnel use survey data concerning student learning needs to make decisions regarding program expenditures.

The budget planning process attempts to balance the need of adequate program support with the need for fiscal restraint. First, the budget is discussed in broad based terms with the school board and leadership. Then the school board begins to discuss the proposed budgets and the implications for property taxes. These conversations take place in public meetings at the board level and with community volunteers ("Budget Buddies") who help in the budgeting process.

A major example of community support is the frequent passage of the annual school budget. The community voted for a bond of 18 million dollars for the purpose of renovations and additions to the school facility, including the cafeteria, library, gymnasium, fields, and classrooms. These projects have been accomplished while student enrollment has increased, and new programs have been offered. During the last two years, the school has added clubs such as football, rugby, ultimate Frisbee, and dance. New course offerings were made in the areas of Music, Art, Mathematics, English, and Social Studies, and new staff was hired to accommodate population growth.

Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the budgetary process, including its development and implementation. The budgetary process begins with individual teachers who indicate the initial department needs for the following year on forms that are distributed in October. This teacher-developed budget then goes to the Principal/Leadership Team (house directors and administrators). The requests are presented to Program Council for review and prioritizing recommendations. During November and December, the Leadership Team meets to discuss the overall budget in progress, and, from time to time, revises these budgets. The principal prepares the overall budget for presentation to the school board in January. The town meeting vote. Public meetings are then held in each community to explain the proposed budget prior to the annual school meeting vote in early March. Should a budget be rejected, the principal makes recommendations to the board, which determine subsequent actions.

Community Resources for Learning Executive Summary

Sample High School is well-supported by many organizations within the community. The local businesses, higher educational institutions, and a generous community have had a positive influence on the school and the programs it can offer. Students have many opportunities to learn beyond the construct of the school through internships and community service.

The newly renovated building provides many upgrades including more classroom space, a fitness center, cafeteria, library, athletic fields, and additional parking. The only area left for a renovation for safety concerns is the auditorium.

The administration and the faculty work annually on the course enrollment trends, program changes and the budget. The school board and community members work to consistently pass the budget on an annual basis.

Sample High School works hard to effectively communicate with parents and community members. The newsletter, mailings, website, and advisory announcements keep students, their parents, and the community aware of opportunities available at the school.

The maintenance staff does an excellent job in the upkeep of the building; however, by looking at data collected from the operation of the expanded facility during this current year it is evident that more resources are needed to support and adequately maintain the facility. From the daily washing of doors and windows to the impeccable maintenance of the grounds, the maintenance staff works to keep the building safe, clean and well-maintained.

*The Community Resources for Learning Committee feels that adheres to a level of **Exemplary** for this Standard.*

Community Resources for Learning
Strengths and Needs

Strengths:

- An impressive renovation which includes a new cafeteria, a new library, a renovated learning center and classrooms, and twenty new classrooms.
- A financially supportive community which is highly involved in the educational process.
- A maintenance staff which keeps the school clean and well-maintained.
- Multiple and strong partnerships within the community.

Needs:

- Devise and implement a plan for the consistent cataloguing of equipment.
- Renovate the auditorium.
- Increase maintenance resources.